



## DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY

### Coast Guard

### 33 CFR Part 165

[Docket Number USCG-2021-0661]

RIN 1625-AA11

### Regulated Navigation Area; Offshore, Cape Canaveral, Florida

**AGENCY:** Coast Guard, DHS.

**ACTION:** Notice of proposed rulemaking.

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**SUMMARY:** The Coast Guard is proposing to replace the existing safety zone in Captain of the Port Zone Jacksonville, Offshore Cape Canaveral, Florida with a regulated navigation area (RNA). The existing safety zone is composed of four large regulated areas and was established in 2009 with the intent of protecting vessels from risks posed from rockets launching from facilities on Cape Canaveral. Changes in the type and size of launch vehicles, rocket component recovery methods, and the increased frequency of launches pose variable risks to marine traffic and require a more flexible regulatory tool. The proposed RNA would encompass all waters within typical rocket flight trajectories originating from launch complexes on and around Cape Canaveral, FL and out to 12 nautical miles. We invite your comments on this proposed rulemaking.

**DATES:** Comments and related material must be received by the Coast Guard on or before [INSERT DATE 30 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER].

**ADDRESSES:** You may submit comments identified by docket number USCG-2021-0661 using the Federal Decision Making Portal at <https://www.regulations.gov>. See the “Public Participation and Request for Comments” portion of the **SUPPLEMENTARY**

**INFORMATION** section for further instructions on submitting comments.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** If you have questions about this proposed rulemaking, call or email Mr. A. Eugene Stratton, Seventh District, Waterways Management Branch (DPW), U.S. Coast Guard; telephone 305-415-6750, email [a.eugene.stratton@uscg.mil](mailto:a.eugene.stratton@uscg.mil).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:**

**I. Table of Abbreviations**

|        |                                 |
|--------|---------------------------------|
| CFR    | Code of Federal Regulations     |
| DHS    | Department of Homeland Security |
| FR     | <b>Federal Register</b>         |
| NPRM   | Notice of proposed rulemaking   |
| §      | Section                         |
| U.S.C. | United States Code              |

**II. Background, Purpose, and Legal Basis**

The Coast Guard is proposing to replace the existing safety zone in 33 CFR 165.775 titled “Safety Zone; Captain of the Port Zone Jacksonville; Offshore Cape Canaveral, Florida” with a regulated navigation area (RNA). The existing safety zone is composed of four large regulated areas and was established in 2009 with the intent of protecting marine traffic from the hazards associated with the launching of space vehicles, to expedite notification to the public, and to reduce the administrative workload of the Coast Guard. Changes in the type and size of launch vehicles, rocket component recovery methods, and the increased frequency of launches pose variable risks to marine traffic and require a more flexible regulatory tool. The proposed RNA would encompass all waters within typical rocket flight trajectories originating from launch complexes on and around Cape Canaveral, FL and out to 12 nautical miles. We invite your comments on this proposed rulemaking.

The Coast Guard proposes this rulemaking under authority in 46 U.S.C. 70034, 70051; 33 CFR 1.05-1, 6.04-1, 6.04-6, and 160.5, and Department of Homeland Security Delegation No. 00170.1, Revision No. 01.2.

### **III. Discussion of Proposed Rule**

The Seventh Coast Guard District Commander is proposing to replace the existing Offshore Cape Canaveral Safety Zone in 33 CFR 165.775, with a RNA. Prior to the safety zone that was established in 2009, the Captain of the Port (COTP) Jacksonville issued temporary federal regulations for each rocket launch from Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, now called Cape Canaveral Space Force Station. At the time, 12-15 launches a year was typical. The four “zones” were based on historical and projected launch azimuth data and designed in collaboration with the U.S. Air Force, 45<sup>th</sup> Space Wing Range Operations and Safety Departments and U.S. Coast Guard Space Transportation Systems program office in Port Canaveral, FL.

Contemporary flight analyses models and risk assessments are more advanced and require a far smaller hazard area for typical launches than the four “zones” established in the Offshore Cape Canaveral Safety Zone of 2009. For most launches originating from Cape Canaveral, the existing safety zones are far too large and enforcement of them may unnecessarily restrict vessel traffic.

Rocket launch activity has doubled since 2009. In 2020 the 45<sup>th</sup> Space Wing (now designated as Space Launch Delta 45 under the U.S. Space Force) launched 39 missions which required 20 activations of the 2009 safety zone. The type, configuration, and mission profile of contemporary governmental and commercial rockets adds additional variability to risk assessments and requires a more adaptable regulatory tool.

A Safety Zone, as defined in 33 CFR 165.20, is intended to limit access to a hazardous area to authorized persons, vehicles, or vessels. Given the rapidly changing nature of space launch operations in the area, an RNA, as defined in 33 CFR 165.11, which allows the control of vessel traffic with more flexibility and expediency, is the more appropriate regulatory tool.

This RNA is not meant to replace, alter, or conflict with Coast Guard security

zones as described in 33 CFR 165.701, Vicinity, Kennedy Space Center, Merritt Island, FL; or 33 CFR 165.705, Port Canaveral Harbor, Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, FL. The regulatory text we are proposing appears at the end of this document.

We propose the following area to be a RNA: All waters offshore Cape Canaveral from surface to bottom, encompassed by a line connecting the following points beginning with Point 1 at 28°48'54" N, 80°28'40" W; thence southwest to Point 2 at 28°43'20" N, 80°41'W; thence south along the shoreline to Point 3 at 28°26'40" N, 80°32'49" W; thence continuing south offshore to Point 4 at 28°10' N, 80°23'20" W; thence east Point 5 at 28°10'N, 80°21'13" W; thence north along the 12 nautical mile line back to Point 1. Coordinates are in WGS 1984. These coordinates are based on the furthest north and south trajectories of typical rocket launch vehicles originating from Cape Canaveral. In addition, there are five typical launch exclusion areas that cover the majority of rocket launches. We list the coordinates and locations of the five typical launch exclusion areas in the regulatory text.

When the RNA is deemed activated, the COTP or a designated representative would be able to restrict vessel movement including but not limited to transiting, anchoring, or mooring within this RNA to protect vessels from hazards associated with rocket launches. These restrictions are temporary in nature and would only be enacted and enforced prior to and just after a successful launch. The COTP would be able to activate any single area, a combination of areas, or establish ad hoc areas within the RNA boundary area as warranted by the specific risks posed by individual launches.

The COTP would inform the public of the activation or status of the RNA by Broadcast Notice to Mariners on VHF-FM channel 16, Public Notice of Enforcement, on-scene presence, and by the display of a yellow ball from a 90-foot pole near the shoreline.

#### **IV. Regulatory Analyses**

We developed this proposed rule after considering numerous statutes and Executive orders related to rulemaking. Below we summarize our analyses based on a number of these statutes and Executive orders, and we discuss First Amendment rights of protestors.

*A. Regulatory Planning and Review*

Executive Orders 12866 and 13563 direct agencies to assess the costs and benefits of available regulatory alternatives and, if regulation is necessary, to select regulatory approaches that maximize net benefits. This NPRM has not been designated a “significant regulatory action,” under Executive Order 12866. Accordingly, the NPRM has not been reviewed by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB).

The RNA will operate in a similar way to the existing safety zone, but will reduce the size of exclusionary areas for each typical rocket launch. We expect the economic impact of this rule to be so minimal that a full regulatory evaluation is unnecessary. The RNA will only be activated a reasonable time before a launch and deactivated once the area is no longer hazardous.

*B. Impact on Small Entities*

The Regulatory Flexibility Act of 1980, 5 U.S.C. 601–612, as amended, requires Federal agencies to consider the potential impact of regulations on small entities during rulemaking. The term “small entities” comprises small businesses, not-for-profit organizations that are independently owned and operated and are not dominant in their fields, and governmental jurisdictions with populations of less than 50,000. The Coast Guard certifies under 5 U.S.C. 605(b) that this proposed rule would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities.

The total time of the RNA activation and thus restriction to the public is expected to be approximately one hour per launch. Vessels would be able to transit around the

activated RNA locations during these launches. We do not anticipate any significant economic impact resulting from activation of the RNA.

If you think that your business, organization, or governmental jurisdiction qualifies as a small entity and that this rule would have a significant economic impact on it, please submit a comment (see **ADDRESSES**) explaining why you think it qualifies and how and to what degree this rule would economically affect it.

Under section 213(a) of the Small Business Regulatory Enforcement Fairness Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-121), we want to assist small entities in understanding this proposed rule. If the rule would affect your small business, organization, or governmental jurisdiction and you have questions concerning its provisions or options for compliance, please call or email the person listed in the FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT section. The Coast Guard will not retaliate against small entities that question or complain about this proposed rule or any policy or action of the Coast Guard.

#### *C. Collection of Information*

This proposed rule would not call for a new collection of information under the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995 (44 U.S.C. 3501–3520).

#### *D. Federalism and Indian Tribal Governments*

A rule has implications for federalism under Executive Order 13132 (Federalism), if it has a substantial direct effect on the States, on the relationship between the National Government and the States, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities among the various levels of government. We have analyzed this proposed rule under that Order and have determined that it is consistent with the fundamental federalism principles and preemption requirements described in Executive Order 13132.

Also, this proposed rule does not have tribal implications under Executive Order 13175 (Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments) because it would

not have a substantial direct effect on one or more Indian tribes, on the relationship between the Federal Government and Indian tribes, or on the distribution of power and responsibilities between the Federal Government and Indian tribes. If you believe this proposed rule has implications for federalism or Indian tribes, please call or email the person listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section.

*E. Unfunded Mandates Reform Act*

The Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995 (2 U.S.C. 1531–1538) requires Federal agencies to assess the effects of their discretionary regulatory actions. In particular, the Act addresses actions that may result in the expenditure by a State, local, or tribal government, in the aggregate, or by the private sector of \$100,000,000 (adjusted for inflation) or more in any one year. Though this proposed rule would not result in such an expenditure, we do discuss the effects of this rule elsewhere in this preamble.

*F. Environment*

We have analyzed this proposed rule under Department of Homeland Security Directive 023-01, Rev. 1, associated implementing instructions, and Environmental Planning COMDTINST 5090.1 (series), which guide the Coast Guard in complying with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (42 U.S.C. 4321–4370f), and have made a preliminary determination that this action is one of a category of actions that do not individually or cumulatively have a significant effect on the human environment. This proposed rule involves the activation of a regulated navigation area with exclusionary zones smaller than the existing safety zones. The activation of the RNA is expected to be an hour total. Normally such actions are categorically excluded from further review under paragraph L60a of Appendix A, Table 1 of DHS Instruction Manual 023–01–001–01, Rev. 1. A preliminary Record of Environmental Consideration supporting this determination is available in the docket. For instructions on locating the docket, see the ADDRESSES section of this preamble. We seek any comments or information that may

lead to the discovery of a significant environmental impact from this proposed rule.

#### *G. Protest Activities*

The Coast Guard respects the First Amendment rights of protesters. Protesters are asked to call or email the person listed in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section to coordinate protest activities so that your message can be received without jeopardizing the safety or security of people, places, or vessels.

### **V. Public Participation and Request for Comments**

We view public participation as essential to effective rulemaking, and will consider all comments and material received during the comment period. Your comment can help shape the outcome of this rulemaking. If you submit a comment, please include the docket number for this rulemaking, indicate the specific section of this document to which each comment applies, and provide a reason for each suggestion or recommendation.

*Submitting comments.* We encourage you to submit comments through the Federal Decision Making Portal at <https://www.regulations.gov>. To do so, go to <https://www.regulations.gov>, type USCG-2021-0661 in the search box and click "Search." Next, look for this document in the **Search Results** column, and click on it. Then click on the **Comment** option. If you cannot submit your material by using <https://www.regulations.gov>, call or email the person in the **FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT** section of this proposed rule for alternate instructions.

*Viewing material in docket.* To view documents mentioned in this proposed rule as being available in the docket, find the docket as described in the previous paragraph, and then select "Supporting & Related Material" in the Document Type column. Public comments will also be placed in our online docket and can be viewed by following instructions on the <https://www.regulations.gov> Frequently Asked Questions webpage. We review all comments received, but we will only post comments that address the topic



of the proposed rule. We may choose not to post off-topic, inappropriate, or duplicate comments that we receive.

*Personal information.* We accept anonymous comments. Comments we post to <https://www.regulations.gov> will include any personal information you have provided. For more about privacy and submissions to the docket in response to this document, see DHS's eRulemaking System of Records notice (85 FR 14226, March 11, 2020).

### **List of Subjects in 33 CFR Part 165**

Harbors, Marine safety, Navigation (water), Reporting and recordkeeping requirements, Security measures, Waterways.

For the reasons discussed in the preamble, the Coast Guard proposes to amend 33 CFR part 165 as follows:

### **PART 165—REGULATED NAVIGATION AREAS AND LIMITED ACCESS AREAS**

1. The authority citation for part 165 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 46 U.S.C. 70034, 70051; 33 CFR 1.05-1, 6.04-1, 6.04-6, and 160.5; Department of Homeland Security Delegation No. 00170.1, Revision No. 01.2.

2. Revise § 165.775 to read as follows:

#### **§ 165.775 Regulated Navigation Area; Launch Area Offshore Cape Canaveral, FL.**

(a) *Location.* (1) The following area is a regulated navigation area (RNA): All waters offshore Cape Canaveral from surface to bottom, encompassed by a line connecting the following points beginning with Point 1 at 28°48'54" N, 80°28'40" W; thence southwest to Point 2 at 28°43'20" N, 80°41' W; thence south along the shoreline to Point 3 at 28°26'40" N, 80°32'49" W; thence continuing south offshore to Point 4 at 28°10' N, 80°23'20" W; thence east Point 5 at 28°10' N, 80°21'13" W; thence north along the 12 nautical mile line back to Point 1. Coordinates are in WGS 1984. These

coordinates are based on the furthest north and south trajectories of typical rocket launch vehicles originating from Cape Canaveral.

(2) While restrictions may be enforced anywhere within the boundaries of the RNA, there are five typical launch exclusion areas that cover the majority of rocket launches. Typical launch hazard areas include all navigable waters within the following coordinates, encompassed by a line starting at Point 1 connecting the following points:

(i) Northeast Launch Hazard Area:

|         |             |              |
|---------|-------------|--------------|
| Point 1 | 28°47'47" N | 080°27'48" W |
| Point 2 | 28°42'18" N | 080°34'55" W |
| Point 3 | 28°39'13" N | 080°37'49" W |
| Point 4 | 28°32'29" N | 080°33'53" W |
| Point 5 | 28°34'00" N | 080°29'00" W |
| Point 6 | 28°39'43" N | 080°21'57" W |

(ii) East Northeast Launch Hazard Area:

|         |             |              |
|---------|-------------|--------------|
| Point 1 | 28°43'53" N | 080°24'50" W |
| Point 2 | 28°36'10" N | 080°35'20" W |
| Point 3 | 28°31'46" N | 080°33'40" W |
| Point 4 | 28°34'42" N | 080°28'40" W |
| Point 5 | 28°40'45" N | 080°22'28" W |

(iii) Large East Launch Hazard Area:

|         |             |              |
|---------|-------------|--------------|
| Point 1 | 28°40'32" N | 080°22'21" W |
| Point 2 | 28°39'14" N | 080°37'48" W |
| Point 3 | 28°27'00" N | 080°31'55" W |

|         |             |              |
|---------|-------------|--------------|
| Point 4 | 28°27'35" N | 080°17'48" W |
|---------|-------------|--------------|

(iv) Small East Launch Hazard Area:

|         |             |              |
|---------|-------------|--------------|
| Point 1 | 28°38'28" N | 080°21'24" W |
| Point 2 | 28°39'00" N | 080°31'00" W |
| Point 3 | 28°38'00" N | 080°36'58" W |
| Point 4 | 28°32'00" N | 080°33'45" W |
| Point 5 | 28°31'32" N | 080°18'35" W |

(v) Southeast Launch Hazard Area:

|         |             |              |
|---------|-------------|--------------|
| Point 1 | 28°37'00" N | 080°29'00" W |
| Point 2 | 28°35'48" N | 080°34'59" W |
| Point 3 | 28°26'40" N | 080°32'49" W |
| Point 4 | 28°10'00" N | 080°23'20" W |
| Point 5 | 28°10'00" N | 080°21'13" W |
| Point 6 | 28°23'10" N | 080°18'41" W |

(b) *Definitions.* The following definitions apply to this section:

*Designated representative* means Coast Guard Patrol Commanders including Coast Guard coxswains, petty officers and other officers operating Coast Guard vessels, and federal, state, and local officers designated by or assisting the Captain of the Port (COTP) Jacksonville in the enforcement of RNAs, safety zones, and security zones.

(c) *Regulations.* (1) The COTP or a designated represented may restrict vessel movement including but not limited to transiting, anchoring, or mooring within this RNA to protect vessels from hazards associated with rocket launches. These restrictions are temporary in nature and will only be enacted and enforced prior to and just after a successful launch.

(2) The COTP may activate any single area, a combination of areas, or establish ad hoc areas within the RNA boundary area as warranted by the specific risks posed by

individual launches.

(d) *Notice of activation of RNA.* The COTP will inform the public of the activation or status of the RNA by Broadcast Notice to Mariners on VHF-FM channel 16, Public Notice of Enforcement, on-scene presence, and by the display of a yellow ball from a 90-foot pole near the shoreline at approximately 28°35'00" N, 080°34'36" W and from a 90-foot pole near the shoreline at approximately 28°55'18" N, 080°35'00" W. Coast Guard assets or other Federal, State, or local law enforcement assets will be clearly identified by lights, markings, or with agency insignia.

(e) *Contact information.* The COTP Jacksonville may be reached by telephone at (904) 564-7513. Any on-scene Coast Guard or designated representative assets may be reached on VHF-FM channel 16.

Dated: September 13, 2021

Brendan C. McPherson,  
Rear Admiral, Commander, Seventh Coast Guard District.

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